

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) Process for ~~the preparation of lactic acid and/or lactate wherein lactate, comprising: homolactically and anaerobically fermenting a pentose-containing substrate is homolactically fermented by a moderately thermophilic *Bacillus* species, which ferments anaerobically.~~ species to form lactic acid and/or lactate.
2. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~claim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, wherein the pentose-containing substrate comprises xylose.
3. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, wherein the moderately thermophilic *Bacillus* species is selected from *Bacillus coagulans* ~~and/or~~ and *Bacillus smithii*.
4. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~claim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, wherein the pentose-containing substrate comprises arabinose.
5. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~claim 1 wherein the~~ claim 1, wherein the pentose-containing substrate comprises glucose.
6. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~claim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, wherein the ~~fermentation~~ fermenting is performed by a mixture of moderately thermophilic *Bacillus* species and another lactic-acid producing microorganism.
7. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~claim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, further comprising separating the lactic acid and/or lactate ~~formed is separated from the a~~ fermentation broth.
8. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~claim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, wherein the moderately thermophilic ~~baeillus~~ Bacillus species is grown on a chemically defined medium.

9. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~claim 8 wherein the biomass is removed~~claim 7, further comprising removing biomass from the fermentation broth prior to the separation of separating the lactic acid and/or lactate therefrom from the fermentation broth, wherein the moderately thermophilic *Bacillus* species is grown on a chemically defined medium.

10. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~claim 8 wherein~~claim 7, further comprising subjecting the lactic acid and/or lactate produced is subjected to one or more purification steps after separation separating the lactic acid and/or lactate from the fermentation broth, wherein the moderately thermophilic *Bacillus* species is grown on a chemically defined medium.